


THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION
OF A
STUDENT COUNCIL

LARRY IRVIN WALDEN, JR.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2011 with funding from
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://www.archive.org/details/organizationadmi00wald>

Manuscript Thesis

Unpublished theses submitted for the Master's degrees are deposited in the Florida Southern College Library and are available for inspection. Use of any thesis is limited by the rights of the author. Bibliographical references may be noted, but passages may not be copied unless the author has given permission. Credit must be given in subsequent written or published work.

A library which borrows this thesis for use by its clientele is expected to make sure that the borrower is aware of the above restrictions.

Florida Southern College Library

12507 1 1 2000

[illegible]

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Edward Lee Flemming, Jr.
Assistant Professor of Education

THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION
OF A
STUDENT COUNCIL

- - - - -

Project

LARRY IRVIN WALDEN, JR.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in the School of Education of
Florida Southern College

APPROVAL CHECK

Dr. Ludd Myrl Spivey. _____
Dr. Charles Tinsley Thrift, Jr. _____
Dr. James Claudius Peel _____
Mrs. Grace L. de Casterline _____
Mr. Samuel T. Lastinger S.T.L.
Dr. Clarence Leroy Murray C.L.M.
Mr. James Gordon Ogden, Jr. _____
Mr. Donald Alexander Thompson _____
Dr. Thomas Jefferson Wagner _____

Advisor Edward Lee Hemming

- - - - -

This project was organized and partly carried out. For reasons beyond the writer's control the Student Council organization was discontinued. Upon investigation, my faculty advisor thought sufficient work had been done to warrant the report of this project. However it will be possible for this project to be reopened and carried out completely in the 1948-49 school year at the school in which it was begun.

- - - - -

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

OF A

STUDENT COUNCIL

	Page
Foreword.	v
Personal Data Sheet of the Writer	vii
Code for the Good Citizen of the American School	ix
Chapter I. Introduction	1
Chapter II. Aims and Purposes of a Student Council	4
Chapter III. A Plan for the Organization of a Student Council	9
Chapter IV. The Constitution	16
Chapter V. Election of Officers and Council Members	19
Chapter VI. Installation of Officers and Council Members	22
Chapter VII. Plans for Revision or Expansion	25
Chapter VIII. Means of Evaluating the Program	27
Chapter IX. Conclusion	29
Bibliography	33
Appendix	36

FOREWORD

The United States' participation in the recent war of global dimensions has done much more than to make world geography a matter of vital concern to the average citizen. Many of its residents have been stimulated to a reappraisal of their heritage. What are those characteristics which set the United States apart and distinguish its traditions, its purposes and its form of government from those of other nations, we often ask ourselves. In particular, the war has served to focus attention on the United States of America's form of Democracy,¹ in which citizens are free to inquire, to expound, to propose, and to appraise the institutions of government and the conditions essential to its preservation.

Various citizens, in the past, have taken democracy for granted. If they have thought about the matter at all, it has been to associate democracy with the traditional rights and freedoms they have enjoyed as a citizen of this Nation. Oftentimes they have failed to consider the responsibilities which must accompany those rights and freedoms if they are to survive.

Any complacency toward such a situation was removed by the last world conflict. It has presented an opportunity and obligation to us, the school teachers of today, in helping

1. Educational Policies Commission, The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy.

our young people "learn the ways of democracy." Not just knowing and reading about democracy, but sharing its responsibilities which is democracy at its best, should be the experience that pupils live.

For teachers and school administrators seriously concerned with this challenge, this project should make a vital contribution. The Student Council is recognized as an effective means of teaching students civic responsibility through worthwhile experiences. Many high schools have some form of a Student Council. However, Councils vary widely in pattern of organization, in activities carried on, and in the extent to which real responsibilities have been delegated to students.

Concern for democratic values and procedures has been stimulated by the global war. Not only in war are those values and procedures of a democracy tested, but are likewise on trial during the time of peace. The problems we face in the postwar era are likely to demand to the utmost the devotion, the cooperation, and the sense of responsibility of every citizen. The role of the public school in relation to the achievement of these ends is a central and dilated one. "Of the many agencies in the public schools, the most effective for civic education is an active, socially responsible Student Council."²

-
2. Edgar G. Johnston, Chairman, Committee on Student Activities of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Professor of Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Bulletin 124.

PERSONAL DATA SHEET OF THE WRITER

Name: Larry Irvin Walden, Jr.

Age: 29

Present Address: Route 4, Box 335, Plant City, Florida.

Permanent Address: 512 E. Osceola Street, Clewiston, Florida.

Place of Birth: Route 3, Plant City, Florida. Date: Jan. 19, 1919.

Status: Married - 1 child

Professional Objective:

Religious Status: Baptist

Supervising Principal

Education

Undergraduate Level

1. Florida Southern College, Lakeland, Florida, 1936-1940.

B.S. in Education - Florida Southern College, 1940 (Major - Education, Minor - Physics and Biology)

Graduate Level

1. Florida Southern College, Graduate School of Education

- (a) Elementary Supervision and Administration, Dr. J.C. Peel
- (b) Elementary Administration, Mr. A. L. Vergason
- (c) Elementary Supervision, Mr. A. L. Vergason
- (d) Educational Philosophy, Mr. A. L. Vergason
- (e) Methodology of Educational Research, Dr. T. J. Wagner
- (f) Secondary Curriculum Problems, Dr. T. J. Wagner
- (g) Methods of Guidance, Mr. E. L. Fleming
- (h) Other courses to be taken

Work Experience

- 1. Farm laborer and tractor driver, Plant City, Florida, Summer 1932-1936.
- 2. Department Store Clerk, Saturdays and Holidays, M. S. Barker Department Store, Plant City, Florida, 1937-1940.
- 3. Farm and Packing House Manager, Bolton's Farm Lake Harbor, Florida, 1945-46.

Teaching Experience

- 1. Mathematics and Physical Education, Dover Junior High School, Dover, Florida, 1938-39.
- 2. Mathematics and Physical Education, Oak Grove Junior High School, Tampa, Florida, 1940.

3. Assistant Director of Ground School in charge of training instructors for expansion of ground schools, Carlstrom Field, Arcadia, Florida, April, 1941 to June, 1942.
4. Ground School Director, Riddle Field, Union City, Tennessee, June, 1942 to February, 1943.
5. Senior Flight Instructor, Riddle Field, Union City, Tennessee, March, 1943 to February, 1944.
6. Advance R.A.F. Flight Instructor, Embry Riddle Field, Clewiston, Florida, February, 1944 to August, 1945.
7. Ground School Instructor for G.I. approved flight training, Glades Aviation Company, Belle Glade, Florida, nights 1946-47.
8. Teacher in charge and Mathematics, Clewiston Junior High School, Clewiston, Florida, August, 1947 to February, 1948.
9. Mathematics, Science, and Physical Education, Trapnell Junior High School, Route 4, Plant City, Florida, March, 1948 to June, 1948.

Service Experience

Enlisted in Army Air Corps Enlisted Reserve August 23, 1943.
Discharged from Reserve Corps November 26, 1945.

Other

1. President, Obion County Flying Club, Union City, Tennessee, 1943.
2. President, Quarter Back Club, Clewiston, Florida, 1945-46.
3. Music Director, First Baptist Church, Clewiston, Florida, 1945-47.
4. Deacon, First Baptist Church, Clewiston, Florida, 1944-47, Chairman, 1947.
5. Boy Scout Councilor, Sugarland District, Clewiston, Florida, 1946-47.

CODE FOR THE GOOD CITIZEN OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOL

Prepared by the National Association of Student Officers, now called the National Association of Student Councils.

I realize that, as a student in an American high school, I owe an obligation to parents or relatives whose sacrifices have given me the foundations upon which I am building, to the school which offers me an opportunity to develop my natural powers, and to my country which gives me liberty under law, and to my own future as an individual and a citizen.

As a token of my determination honorably to discharge this obligation, I promise:

That I will use the facilities offered by the classroom to enlarge and broaden my interests, to increase my knowledge, to bring me closer to truth, and to cultivate habits of industry and sound thinking.

That I will broaden my sympathies and practice the arts of sociability, true friendliness, and helpfulness in my home, in the school, and in all my associations, avoiding snobishness in my own conduct and condemning it in others.

That I will develop habits of reading and conversing which will broaden my culture and enable me better to understand the problems of community, state, and nation.

That I will carry on discussions in and out of the classroom, not to overcome opponents and gratify my pride but that I may grow in knowledge and wisdom.

That I will avoid every form of cheating or dishonesty and will undertake to discourage all dishonorable practices.

That I will obey every rule of law of school, city, state, and nation, reserving the right to criticize rules and laws constructively, but respecting them so long as they prevail.

That I will use my powers and influence for the common good.

That I will pursue happiness myself and strive to establish conditions under which happiness and opportunity may be hopefully pursued by every one in my home, my school, my community, my country, and the world.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the literature of school administration considerable attention is given to Student Councils and student participation in school administration. Students in our secondary schools are well acquainted with the opportunities for participation in the general management of the school and its program.¹

There is to be found in the secondary schools, of our nation, three distinct student organizations, all operating under the caption of a Student Council. However, to help eliminate any confusion in the topic under discussion, they will be cited as, Student Council, Student Government, and a Student Court.

During the many years that student organizations have been functioning in our secondary schools, it has been evident that the greatest value for the student and for the school tended in the direction of student participation in school administration rather than Student Government or Self-government which is an assembly of students democratically elected to rule the affairs of the student body. This is mute evidence that school administrators have not deemed it advisable to relin-

1. The Student Council in the Secondary School, The National Association of Secondary School Principals, The Bulletin, Vol. 28, No. 124.

quish their final responsibility for the control of the school, with which they are legally charged. As a means of democratizing the general administration of the school and its program, administrators have clearly seen the opportunity for students in self-development as citizens. Administrators have delegated to students through a duly constituted organization like a Student Council, an assembly of students democratically elected to present the student's point of view on school affairs to the administration, a responsibility for participation in the management of the school.

To expect students, still very immature in the ways of management, to govern themselves would be considered unreasonable, and to deny the right to students to share in self-expression and in the management of their own affairs closes one of the great avenues of training adolescent youth in democratic processes. Some schools, under skillful guidance by staff members, have had student conduct Courts, an assembly of students chosen to rule on student behavior under selected conditions. Student courts have successfully administered the school for a day without teachers and have administered deserved punishment to student offenders. Other schools have failed in attempting such a student program and have, therefore, condemned any form of student management and participation because of such experience. All in all, however, student participation in school administration has been highly successful and productive in the development of citizenship qualities which have greatly strengthened our schools and democracy.

The many studies made on student participation in school administration show that, even though there was a lapse in interest in student organizations shortly after 1900, the movement has grown throughout the country in the last forty years. Today there are many schools where the Student Council directs the budget of the entire student activity program, or the extra-curriculum program as it is commonly called. Councils have planned, prepared, and presented under faculty guidance, excellent assembly programs; aided in ushering for school and community gatherings; conducted the lost and found department in the school; set forth desirable and acceptable standards of citizenship in the school lunchroom and on the school grounds; arranged for needed monitorial service about the school; and carried on many other activities in the school citizenship area.

The steady growth of student participation in school administration is supported by ample evidence in the studies of Student Councils made by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals in 1939 and 1944.² Other individual studies by Lent³ and by Jones⁴ support this status of Student Council activities.

-
2. Reported in full in March, 1940 Student Council Handbook, The National Association of Secondary School Principals, The Bulletin, Vol. 24, No. 89.
 3. H. C. Lent, "The Status of the Student Council in the Class A and B Junior and Senior High Schools in Michigan," Unpublished Master of Arts Paper, Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1939, p. 62.
 4. Galen Jones, "Extra-Curricular Activities in Relation to the Curriculum," New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935, p. 17.

CHAPTER II

AIMS AND PURPOSES OF A STUDENT COUNCIL

A great many aims and purposes have been stated by those interested in student participation in school management. While the number of different statements may be many, the opinions of supporters of student participation in school management can be classified under a relatively small number of general aims and purposes. Two major purposes are generally agreed upon. These are that the aim and the purpose should be the improvement of both the student and the school. For the student, the aim and the purpose should be to provide wholesome and satisfying experience; for the school, they must contribute to the effectiveness of its program. They must attempt to develop adolescents to be discriminating and thoughtful citizens in a democratic school society.

No one who has seriously considered the methods which may be used to train adolescents to be well-informed, serious-minded citizens would claim that inaugurating a Student Council is the principal method of promoting future good citizenship in the state. The total process is promoted or hindered by the lack of democratic pupil-teacher relationships, teacher-principal relationships, the curriculum content, and many other factors. Probably the most effective way of developing future good citizenship is to emphasize

it through democratic living in the classrooms, corridors, school grounds, playing field, and in the Council meetings. Certainly the curriculum must bear a major responsibility in training for citizenship. The student body must learn the basic facts relative to the development of civic education through problem solving or thinking, through understanding and practicing the skills of democracy, and by helping improve human relationships, local, state, national, and international which face citizens.

The Implication of a Student Council gives the students an opportunity to share in the responsibilities of democracy and learn through successes and failures, in the co-operative management of student activities, how life in a democracy can be made useful, profitable, and enjoyable. Good citizenship grows in a school where issues and problems are considered by faculty and students intelligently and cooperatively.

Student participation is not a panacea for the difficulties which beset the public schools; it does offer an excellent method for giving pupils a habit of mind that will consider public business a matter of special interest to the private citizen. Pupil participation is not a fad. It helps to teach citizenship by participation, just as industrial arts, football, and dancing are taught. It is one method by which actual training and experience in citizenship can be had.

Its prevalence in public school systems may well be expected to increase.

There has been many studies conducted in an effort to ascertain what secondary school principals believe should be the aims and purposes of the Student Council. One made by H. C. Lent¹ while in the University of Chicago concerned Student Councils in 160 high schools in the State of Michigan. He listed them under five major headings. The following table indicates the percentage of principals who mentioned each of these as objectives:

Objectives of Student Council

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
1. To develop student responsibility, initiative, leadership, and school pride	93.7
2. To promote worthy citizenship training	69.3
3. To provide for pupil expression	51.2
4. To provide a working model of a govern- mental unit under which students will live	22.5
5. To promote welfare of the school through proper student-faculty relationship	1.2

It is only natural that the constitution in the organization of a Student Council should express the purposes

1. H. C. Lent, "The Status of the Student Council in the Class A and B Junior and Senior High Schools in Michigan," Unpublished Master of Arts Paper, Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1939, p. 3.

for which the Council exists. Many Constitutions now in use by Student Councils have been examined. They were very brief but specific. Some few, however, were general, in that they included a wide variety of activities. Any Constitution should be broad in scope, yet there is danger of being so general that it leads to confusion and to the fear to act on the part of the Council. Of the group of constitutions examined for the National Association of Secondary-School Principals² indicated the following: three per cent contained no statement of purposes; eleven per cent had only one purpose; seventeen per cent two purposes; thirty-four per cent three purposes; twenty-two per cent four purposes; six per cent five purposes; eight per cent six purposes; three per cent seven purposes; and one per cent eight purposes. Of those examined, no one had more than eight purposes.

It will be indicated from the study of the Constitution of various Student Councils that the aims and the purposes are many and varied. However, upon careful study, it can be concluded that fundamentally all follow a unitary general underlying principle on which the Student Council movement has moved forward. To provide democratic experience for students through participation in the management of their school affairs is the underlying principle. There are many

2. National Association of Secondary-School Principals,
Bulletin 124, p. 18.

.

lay people who contend that the schools have failed in teaching student self-management. There seems to be only one conclusion; that is, lay people show a decided lack of familiarity with what the schools are doing. They, as so often is the case, are guilty of hasty generalization. While one may find specific instances in which a school may have failed in this respect, many schools are developing effective training for citizenship. As yet, schools have not reached the ideal, but if they did, then that for which they are striving would not be an ideal. Certainly one can rightly conclude that the Student Council is being used increasingly as the center from which radiate democratic activities in the school.

Specific purposes of a Student Council derived from a study conducted for the National Association of Secondary-School Principals³ in 1940 listed them as: (1) to furnish citizenship training, (2) to allow pupils to participate in or manage extra-curriculum affairs, (3) to promote proper student-faculty relationships, (4) to promote general welfare, (5) to provide for pupil expression, (6) to furnish a working model of the government.

3. Student Council Handbook, National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Bulletin 89.

CHAPTER III

A PLAN FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF A STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council, along with all the other student activities in the school, constitutes one of the most important responsibilities of the school administration. If the organization of the Student Council is carefully planned, there is real assurance of its value to the school's total program of education. It affords students excellent opportunities to work out, independently, relationships with each other with minimum interference from adults and to encounter mental experiences which will facilitate adjustments. Through Student Council procedures, students learn to become a functioning part of an increasingly complex and ever-changing social order.

Before the establishment of a Student Council, no matter how essential one might think it is, there should be a definitely felt need on the part of both the students and the faculty. Teachers must be of the opinion that student participation in school management is an essential part of an adequate school program. They must be sympathetic with the idea that students can contribute to the effective functioning of school administration. Students, likewise, must feel a definite need for such an organization and that they will be expected to grow in assuming these responsibilities that have been delegated to them by the principal of their

school, who after all is responsible to his Superintendent or Board of Education for the efficient functioning of his school. No Student Council should be organized simply because other schools have such an organization or because a principal or the teachers think one should be organized. It must originate solely upon a felt need on the part of the administration, the teachers, and the student body.

In the development of any Student Council a definite philosophy of democracy is necessary as the basis of fundamental expansion. It should be one of participation and sharing, a means through which students develop a belief in an intelligent understanding and appreciation of our concept of democratic government and its processes. This is certainly an excellent opportunity for the school to be a laboratory for the students to practice democracy. Then the school is the community of operation.

The Council must be an essential part of the total school program. If there is no provision made for the time of meeting within the regular school day, students and teachers can reasonably be expected to look upon the organization as something outside the sphere of the school's program and, as such, engage in its activities only in a half-hearted manner. It becomes something "extra" added to the already overworked teacher, something that he or she has to do at the end of a strenuous day when their vitality and enthusiasm, as well as that of the students, are invariably at a low ebb. There-

fore, it is necessary to provide time for meeting and operation during the regular school day as a definite part of the school's time schedule. It is also necessary to relieve the Sponsor of other duties so that he may have ample time to plan and to counsel with the Council officers and other members.

Not all Student Council organizations have proven successful. This fact does not condemn the organization in itself. Rather, it points out the necessity for careful planning for development and growth.

Patrick¹ in a study of factors that were deterrents to the success of Student Councils in eighty secondary schools, found the following ranked first in importance: (1) difficulty of securing efficient and successful pupil leaders, (2) problems of getting all members to participate in work, (3) pupils made leaders on the basis of popularity rather than ability, (4) lack of interest and responsibility on the part of pupils, and (5) objection to telling on and being disciplined by fellow pupils.

There being a felt need for a student organization by the administration, the formation of a council should be discussed by the faculty. There should be a vote taken by

1. H. E. Patrick, "Pupil Participation in School Administration and Government in Eighty Secondary Schools," Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1938, Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, p. 73.

secret written ballot after several days of continued observation and speculation by the faculty. This vote determines whether the faculty is in agreement with the administration. After the faculty agrees that the establishment of a council is necessary for the improvement of the school program, a member of the faculty or the principal should explain the purpose and operation of the council to the students at the next general assembly. There should be continued discussion of the Student Council by every home room teacher.

Sample copies of Constitutions from various schools should be submitted for student study and discussion in the different home rooms. The lapsed time between the presentation of the idea to the student body may be several weeks. Caution! Do not rush in taking the vote for the establishment of the Council, for often a council is organized without the students thoroughly understanding the implications of a Student Council. A secret written ballot should be used in ascertaining the desire of the students, and should be counted by a student-elected committee before the Principal or a delegated member of the faculty.

In a number of schools, after the teachers and students (a suggested three-fourths) have expressed their wish for the establishment of a council, the Principal grants a Charter to the council, authorizing the establishment of a Council and delegates to them certain general powers. The

following is an example of a Charter used by the Springfield, New Jersey High School.²

By the authority vested in me by the Board of Education of Union County Regional High School District No. 1, I hereby grant this Charter of student participation in the representative Student Council for the school year 1944-45.

Provisions:

1. This Charter is subject to annual renewal.
2. This Student Council is understood to be representative, consisting of the elected Presidents of the four classes and the several home rooms.
3. This Student Council is empowered under its faculty Advisors, to consider all matters pertaining to the development of the spirit, ideals and practice of good citizenship, to provide unity and cooperation of the students and faculty in all extra-curriculum activities of the school, and to promote the general welfare of Regional High School, as well as its good name and reputation.

2. The Student Council in the Secondary School, National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Bulletin 124, p. 23.

4. This Charter does not, and cannot, assign to students the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Education or of any groups provided by the Board of Education to carry out its duties to the citizens. Consequently, any action not in harmony with this fundamental is subject to revision by the Board of Education or its duly constituted authority. Established, granted and signed this first day of September, Nineteen Hundred and Forty-three at the Jonathan Dayton Regional High School for the establishment of a Student Council.

W. W. Halsey, Supervising Principal.³

Suggested steps to follow after teachers and students have expressed their desire are listed as aids to the Principal, his faculty and the student body who are considering the establishment of a Student Council in their school: submitted by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals.⁴

1. Develop a philosophy of the theory of democratic government for the school, in consultation with the students.

3. The Student Council in the Secondary School, National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Bulletin 124, p. 19.

4. Ibid., p. 19.

2. Survey the literature in the field in order to become thoroughly familiar with it and to evaluate it in terms of what is adaptable to the needs of the school.
3. Discuss Student Council Organization with other Principals and Advisors in schools which have councils. These should be those having types or forms of council.
4. Visit schools to watch various types of organizations in action, to observe council meetings and to see council projects in progress.
5. Attend, if possible, a regional or state convention of Student Councils.
6. Believe wholeheartedly that student participation and cooperation in the administration of the school is an essential part of any good program of secondary-school instruction.
7. Choose sponsor or sponsors who are familiar with student participation in school administration and who are enthusiastic about it and has ability to lead without being autocratic - teachers who have the knack of getting students to feel that they are doing things worth while. Be advisors, not dictators.
8. Begin with a minimum of responsibilities and projects, increasing these as the Council shows advancement in assuming additional ones with success; i.e., provide progressively educative experiences.
9. Develop a program of training for Student Council officers and other members.
10. Provide for the upgrading of sponsors.
11. Provide ample time for conducting the work of the Student Council.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONSTITUTION

The success or failure of a Student Council in a particular school will depend upon the effectiveness of its Constitution. Everyone will agree that great care should be taken in its construction. Senior high school Council Constitutions generally are more varied in activities and more complex in form than those for junior high schools. Yet, even in senior high schools there is a tendency toward a short and simple form of Constitution.

In developing any Constitution, its content should have first consideration. This, however, may be determined somewhat by what the Council plans to do. Those forms now in more common use include Council of home-room representatives, Council of home-room Presidents, Council of class and activity organization representatives, as well as variations and combinations of these.

Care should be taken, in the development of any of these forms, to assure that the completed Constitution will function effectively. The Constitution should be developed with certain criteria in mind. A few of these are listed as follows: (1) definiteness of responsibility, (2) ease of operation, (3) clarity of aims or purposes, (4) sensitiveness to student wishes, (5) care in delegating powers and duties as well as in instituting the machinery through which these may

function and (6) adequacy of contributing to the organizational needs of the students.

Seeing that there is adequate representation of the people governed as well as ample provision for all to voice their views, is one of the major responsibilities of any democratic government. While there is a great variation in form, the underlying principle is that of electing a representative group by the student body. Therefore, in developing a Constitution, care must be taken to see that adequate representation of the people to be governed is accomplished.

In a survey of one hundred and sixty-five Constitutions examined by the National Association of Secondary-School Principals¹ the Council of class representatives runs a very close second with the Council of home-room representatives in frequency of use. Of the many forms used, these two, with their variations, constitute more than eighty per cent of the Constitutions examined.

As an aid to those forming a new Council or to those who wish to revise their Constitution, the Constitution of the Clewiston Junior High School, Clewiston, Florida, will be included in this report.² As it is true that no Council Constitution should be blindly patterned after any adult civic organization, so is it equally true that no school should

1. The Student Council in the Secondary School, National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Bulletin 124, p. 13.

2. Appendix, pp. 36-43.

blindly pattern its Constitution after the one in reprint as a sample Constitution for a class Representative Council.

This constitution was drafted by the faculty advisor, the writer, and the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the home-rooms at the Clewiston Junior High School. A careful study of several different constitutions was made along with a survey of the student's lack of democratic living in and about the school. Upon completion of the draft, it was submitted to the various home-rooms for discussion and criticism. The students expressed a desire to vote by a show of hands for the establishment of the Constitution. A secret written ballot election was held and the necessary three-fourths majority of the student body voted for the adoption of the Constitution.

CHAPTER V

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

The election should be such as will attract the active interest of everyone in the student body. It must be conducted on a high plane. Certainly if this is to be representative of a democracy in action, every student should participate in the voting. The ability to vote should not be limited to those who have purchased activity tickets or even paid their tax if, indeed, a tax should ever be levied.

There are many types of elections held for the selection of the officers and council members, depending to a large extent upon the size of the student body. Some are very simple in that a ballot is prepared and a definite period during the school day is set aside for voting. Often the voting is done in each home-room while again the ballot boxes are placed in the corridors of the school. Many of the larger schools are using a modified convention plan, which is similar to the nomination and election of the President of the United States. In most instances these schools have developed specific rules and regulations governing the conduct of the convention.

The guide for the election of officers and council members to be cited in the following pages is taken from the Constitution presented in this dissertation. The school for which this Constitution was drafted is a small junior high

school of about one hundred members in the student body.

Each home room, being a complete grade, had four council members elected by its pupils. The home room president and vice-president automatically became two of the four members, unless they were elected as one of the officers of the Student Council, by the school at large. In case a home room president, vice-president or both was elected to one of the four offices of the Student Council, the home room elected the necessary council members, so their representation would be four other than the council officers.

The office of president was restricted to the ninth and eighth grades, vice-president to the eighth and seventh grades, secretary and treasurer open to all grades. For a member of the student body to become a candidate for any of the above offices, a student must have been a resident member of the student body for at least four and one-half months of school prior to the election. The candidate must meet all the standards of character, scholarship and citizenship required by the Council. It was suggested a "B" average or better in citizenship and a "C" average or better in scholarship.

Many schools in preparing the ballots for the officers require that candidates secure a certain number of signers in order to have their names placed on the ballot. This number varies from ten to one hundred signers, according to the size of the school. The signers are generally limited to placing their names on only one petition for the same office. The reader will note the Constitution cited requires ten or more signers, and no student could legally sign the nomination papers of two

candidates competing for the same office.

The election for the Student Council officers was divided into two parts; the primary election and the final election. According to the Constitution, the two highest candidates for each office in the primary election will run for the office which they are nominated in the final election. The final election shall take place one week following the primary election. Preceding the final election, there shall be a Student Council election assembly at which time the two leading candidates for each office and their campaign managers shall deliver a campaign speech. Candidates and their managers may campaign in any suitable manner designed to prove their superiority and attract votes. Unless otherwise voted by the Student Council the final election for president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer shall follow the election assembly at once, and shall consist of a secret written ballot, and shall be conducted at a place designated by the Council. The ballot boxes shall then be taken to the office and counted in the presence of the principal or a designated faculty sponsor. The candidates securing a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected. In case of a tie vote, there shall be a special election under the direction of the Council.

CHAPTER VI

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

In installing the officers and council members for the Student Council of the student body, careful attention should be given to the planning of the entire program of student participation in the management of student affairs. As a means for giving the new organization a good start, public recognition before the student body should be given the officers and the members of the Council. They should be fittingly installed in a dignified assembly program. This might well be looked upon as the biggest event in the life of the student while in high school. The ceremony should be simple but impressive. It should have intellectual and emotional appeal. It can be thrilling in its dramatic appeal and thus add importance and honor to the council. Those being inducted should consider it an honor to serve the school. It should be a thrill and inspiration to them, urging them on to do something of real service to the school; they should recognize in their acceptance the service obligation and opportunity inherited in their election to this council. Certainly there is an excellent opportunity to translate what they do into habit-forming activities. By all means, nothing should be done to detract from the seriousness of the occasion.

As a general rule most of the elections for officers and members of the Council are held near the end of the semester

(if the officers hold office only for one semester), or at the end of the school year (if the officers hold office for a full school year). Still there are a number of schools that elect their officers and Council members at the beginning of the semester or school year. It is considered a good policy to select the new Council near the close of a Council's term so that when the next term begins all is in readiness. This policy makes it possible for the old officers and Council members to conduct the election of new members. Since many of the officers are members of the graduating class, fall elections and installations leave the student body without a directing head.

Whenever the elections are held, the installation ceremony should take place as soon thereafter as is possible. The ceremony should undoubtedly vary from school to school. No attempt will be made to set up a standard form. Suggestions contained here are an example of what was done in the Clewiston Junior High School, and are presented only as such and not as the specific way in which it should be done. The installation ceremony took place the week following the final election as set forth in the Constitution. (1) A formal procession to the stage with all members of the Council and officers seated on the stage (2) Devotions (3) Flag salute - student body (4) Song - student body (5) Address - supervisor (6) Administration of oath to Student Council officers - principal (7) High school songs - student body (8) Administration of oath to other

council members - principal (9) A pledge of loyalty to the Student Council on the part of the entire student body (10) Response - principal and (11) A formal recession of the Council and officers.

CHAPTER VII

PLANS FOR REVISION OR EXPANSION

In the original draft of the Constitution there should be a definite plan for revision by amendments. According to the Constitution herein, the plan for revision is as follows: the Council proposes and passes on an amendment by three-fourths vote of the total membership of the Council. Before an amendment can be voted upon by the Council, it has to be proposed at the previous meeting. Upon receiving the sanction of the Council it is submitted to the student body for approval, but cannot be voted upon for acceptance until expiration of one school month following the acceptance by the Council. The delay will provide a cooling off period in case there is a change advocated as a result of action taken by the administration on some student activity. The amendment shall be in force when ratified by a three-fourths vote of the student body. This vote shall be taken by secret written ballot.

Usually a Student Council will not seek more responsibility or power until they are capable of performing the duties required. Many principals recognize this and rectify the situation by reorganization of the Student Council into Student Government or Student Court. The plan for expansion of the Student Council into a Student Government or a Student Court should first be upon a request proposed and passed on by the Council. The principal should then discuss the pro-

posal with the faculty and if they approve with the Board of Public Instruction (the principal is directly responsible to them for the proper administration of the schools policies) then the proposal may be submitted to the student body for acceptance or rejection, as provided in the Constitution.

CHAPTER VIII

A MEANS OF EVALUATING THE PROGRAM

The school would do well to evaluate its student's organization by identifying it with one of the three levels of excellence as analyzed by the Educational Policies Commission.¹

The routine level is first. Here traditions and customs determine most of the policies and procedures. Student Council, clubs and student life outside of regular class hours are left to run by themselves. Interscholastic athletic contests are the really big things. Social activities are run for the social elite of the school. Little use is made of the potential civic values from extra-classroom activities.

The imitative level is second. Here student activities grow up rapidly without plan or purpose, rhyme or reason. New activities are introduced because they are used elsewhere. The student's wants and interests are not considered. There may be a swing from absolute autocracy to extreme liberalism in the name of democracy. Student Council is thought of as a game, never becoming involved in real issues or used as an instrument to teach the functions of democratic government.

1. Educational Policies Commission, The Ways of Democracy, Chapter IX.

The constructive level is third. Well-developed out of class activities meet the wants and needs of students. The student activity program is a fully recognized part of the school's work and used as a laboratory of civic education. Here, with all of the activities and practice closely related to everyday life of the community, a veritable community in itself and its destiny in the hands of its citizens, we see democracy in action.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

After the council officers and members have been elected, it is then that the real work of the council begins. The success or failure of the council will, to a large extent, be dependent upon the manner in which its meetings are conducted, the relationships that exist between the school staff and the students and the fact that the council has been made to feel that it is doing something worth while.

The manner in which the new president conducts his first meeting is of much importance. If a real attitude of respect toward student participation in school management is to be secured from the members of the council and the student body, no act of frivolity, no stupid blunders on the part of the officers and no inexcusable digressions should be permitted at the council meetings. For this reason, there is a real necessity to train the student officers for their work.

Many schools have a definite course of instruction, not only for their officers, but for council members as well. In addition, the new officers are elected before the old council retires, this will permit them to attend one or more meetings under the direction of the old council. The new council will be familiar with the workings and order of transacting business and better qualified to direct the work of the council during the next school year.

In the operation of the Student Council the faculty relationships must be harmonious and cooperative. The advisor

must have a sympathetic understanding of student life. In order to assist the students in their work, the advisor must gain their confidence in his ability in guidance. The advisor must be an advisor in reality, not just in name. A dictatorial advisor can never lead a council to function efficiently. In such a democratic school community the council will be able to function and students will gain valuable experiences to fit them for life in our democratic society.

It can readily be seen that the selection of the advisor to the council is of real consequence. If the principal feels that he has no one on his faculty sufficiently capable to make a success of the council, it would be better that the organization of a council be postponed until a capable advisor is available.

The principal of a school probably should not undertake to act as advisor of the Student Council because the students may be reluctant to discuss certain matters concerning the school's operation that they would not be reluctant to discuss before another member of the faculty. With the many duties and obligations required of him, not only in connection with the administration of affairs within the school, but because of his position in the community, it is impossible for him to devote the necessary time and energy to the task of supervising the council.

In selecting a faculty member to serve as advisor of the Student Council, the principal should take adequate time for observing the attitude of the students toward the different

teachers, not only in the classroom, but in the corridors, assembly, gymnasium or athletic field. There are teachers who acquire a cheap flamboyant popularity with a set of students, but the principal must look for something deeper than this. He must discriminate between this type of popularity and genuine, lasting respect for a capable, level-headed, sincere and sympathetic teacher. If possible, the teacher selected for advisor should be well-versed in parliamentary procedure, although it would be better to waive this qualification than the personal qualities.

After a teacher or teachers have been selected and have accepted the appointment as sponsor, the principal should not consider that he is relieved of further responsibility in the operation of the council. The principal must make sure that the smooth functioning of all departments of the council and that cooperation of officers and members with the sponsor uphold his judgment. If the principal finds that his judgment has been faulty, he must immediately set about making a substitution.

For student participation in school management to be a real success and accomplish its full function, the work the council does must approximate real-life situations, not of the "made work" type. Then, too, if students are to learn to work cooperatively and to live together democratically, they must have the right and the opportunity to participate in actual school management. They must share in the development of programs as well as in the administration of them. The idea of

giving a Student Council something to keep them busy, in an effort to divert them from doing what they want to do, and are able to do capably, is largely the reason some organizations have failed. Make sure the council feels that it is doing something worth while, and make sure that what it is doing is worth while. If this objective alone is obtained, there will be a great deal of progress.

If our hope of establishing a citizenry capable of guiding a democracy through a perilous period depended upon our expectation of arousing the whole population to an independent, systematic and sustained study of public affairs, the hope would be weak indeed, but we do not have to depend upon such an expectation. The hope of democracy lies in the probability that, if properly presented, the responsibilities of citizenship may appeal to the best minds, so that a large proportion of these best minds may be devoted to public service rather than being devoted too completely, as at present, to the furthering of private interests. The need of the hour is for a vital and well prepared leadership, not a leadership exerted by a few in the whole nation, but a leadership which makes itself felt in every hamlet and neighborhood.

In what better way could the schools of America assist in meeting this challenge than through the organization of a "Student Council."

Bibliography

The following list of books and magazine articles have been found useful for reference:

Books

Douglass, Harl R., The High School Curriculum. New York: The Ronald Press Company.

Educational Policies Commission, Education for All American Youth. Washington 6, D.C.: The Commission, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1944.

Educational Policies Commission, How You Can Strengthen Democracy. Washington 6, D.C.: The Commission, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1944.

Educational Policies Commission. Learning the Ways of Democracy. Washington 6, D.C.: The Commission, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1940.

Educational Policies Commission. The Purposes of Education in American Democracy. Washington 6, D.C.: The Commission, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1938.

Educational Policies Commission, The Unique Function of Education in American Democracy. Washington 6, D.C.: The Commission, 1201 16th Street, N.W., 1938.

Erickson, Clifford E., A Basic Text for Guidance Workers. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue.

National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Planning for All American Youth. Washington 6, D.C.: The Association, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1944.

National Association of Secondary-School Principals, The Student Council in the Secondary School. Washington 6, D.C.: The Association, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1944, Bulletin 124.

National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Student Council Handbook. Washington 6, D.C.: The Association, 1201 16th Street, N. W., March, 1940, Bulletin 89.

National Association of Student Councils, Student Council Handbook. Washington 6, D.C.: The Association, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1946.

Albuquerque

On the 1st day of June, 1900, I was

present at the meeting of the

Board

of the Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico

Railroad Company, and was informed by the

President of the Company that the

Board had decided to purchase the

property of the Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico

Railroad Company, and that the

Board had also decided to purchase the

property of the Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico

Railroad Company, and that the

Board had also decided to purchase the

property of the Santa Fe and Northern New Mexico

National Association of Student Councils, Student Council Handbook. Washington 6, D.C.: The Association, 1201 16th Street, N. W., 1947.

Magazines

Fretwell, E. K., "Seven Purposes of Pupil Participation in Government." The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, (March, 1931), pp. 108-14.

Hayward, B. W., "Organization of Student Councils of Neighboring Schools." School Activities, (May, 1940), pp. 379-80.

Hyatt, W. S., "Introducing a Student Council to a Small High School." School Activities, (October, 1942), pp. 55-56.

Johnson, Edgar G., Chairman, Committee on Student Activities. Forward Bulletin 124, The National Association of Secondary-School Principals, Bulletin No. 124, 1944.

Jones, Galen, "Extra-Curricular Activities in Relation to the Curricular." New York Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935.

Lent, H. C., "The Status of the Student Council in the Class A and B Junior and Senior High Schools in Michigan." Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1939.

Mayer, Frank, "Judging Student Government." Clearing House, (April, 1942), pp. 151-53.

Mayer, Frank, "A Junior High Student Council." The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, (March, 1944), pp. 69-78.

Patrick, H. E., "Pupil Participation in School Administration and Government in Eighty Secondary Schools." Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1938.

Wilson, H. E., "Democracy in School Life." Civic Leader, (January 20, 1941), pp. 1-4.

Faculty Sponsor: Professor Edward Lee Fleming, Jr.
Assistant Professor of Education

THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION
OF A
STUDENT COUNCIL

- - - - -
Project

LARRY IRVIN WALDEN, JR.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in the School of Education of
Florida Southern College

CONSTITUTION OF THE CLEWISTON JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Clewiston Junior High School, in order to promote better citizenship and interest in our school, and that we may gain experience in the methods of democratic government, do hereby establish this Constitution for the Junior High School Student Council.

ARTICLE I.

Powers and Duties of the Council

Section 1. The Council shall have power to consider all matters brought before it by its members.

Section 2. The Council is to give advice or counsel to the faculty sponsor upon request.

Section 3. The Council shall have charge of:

- a. Lost and Found Department
- b. General bulletin boards
- c. Any activity referred to it by the principal

Section 4. The Council shall approve all appointments made by the president.

Section 5. The Council shall have power to expel a member or officer for just cause by a two-thirds vote of the total membership.

Section 6. Because the principal is responsible to the superintendent of schools and the board of education, he shall have the power to veto all acts of the Council.

ARTICLE II.

The Council

Section 1. The Council shall be composed of:

- a. The officers elected as provided in Article III.
- b. The President and Vice-President of each grade.
- c. Two duly elected Council Representatives from each of the same grades; (Note) It is suggested but not required that the Council Representatives be of the opposite sex from the Grade President and Vice-President to insure a Council Membership truly representative of the student body.

ARTICLE III.

Officers

Section 1. Officers:

- a. The officers of the Council shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer elected for one school year.

Section 2. Candidate:

- a. To become a candidate for any of the above offices, a student must have been a resident member of the student body for at least four and one-half months of school prior to the election. The candidate must meet all the standards of character, scholarship and citizenship required by the Council.

Section 3. Nomination papers:

- a. The nomination papers must be started for a candidate at least two weeks before the date set for the Primary Election and returned to the office one week before the election.
- b. Any candidate receiving ten or more signatures will be entitled to run for the office stated on the nomination papers.
- c. No student may legally sign the nomination papers of two candidates competing for the same office.

Section 4. Election:

- a. The two highest candidates for each office, in the primary election, will run for the office which they are nominated in the final election.
- b. The final election shall take place one week following the primary election. Preceding the final election, there shall be a Student Council election assembly at which time the two leading candidates for each office and their campaign managers shall deliver a campaign speech. Candidates and their managers may campaign in any suitable manner designed to prove their superiority and attract votes.
- c. Unless otherwise voted by the Student Council the final election for president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer shall follow the election

assembly at once, and shall consist of a secret written ballot, and shall be conducted at a place designated by the Council. The ballot boxes shall then be taken to the office and counted in the presence of the principal or a designated faculty sponsor.

- d. Candidates securing a majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected. In case of a tie vote, there shall be a special election under the direction of the Council.

Section 5. Installation of Officers:

- a. The installation of the officers and members of the Council shall be held at a general assembly the week following the final election.

Section 6. Qualifications of Officers and their Duties:

- a. President: The President shall be a member of the eighth or ninth grade, preferably the latter. He (or she) shall be a student in good standing in the school in every way, and should be an outstanding leader for the best interests of the Clewiston Junior High School, in the student body.
- b. Vice-President: The vice-president shall be a member of the seventh or eighth grade, preferably the latter. He (or she) shall conform to all the qualifications of the president. The vice-president shall perform the duties of the presi-

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...
...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

dent in the absence of that officer, and any other duties assigned by the Council as recorded in the Constitution. Preferably, the vice-president should be a boy.

- c. Secretary: The secretary shall be a member of either grade. He (or she) shall meet the character and scholarship qualifications of the president and vice-president, and shall perform the duties of president in the absence of those officers mentioned. The secretary shall take the roll at all regular and special meetings of the Council, and shall keep a record of the business conducted at all meetings. The record, or minutes, of each meeting shall be read at the conclusion of the meeting, and again at the beginning of the following meeting. When approved by vote of the Council at a subsequent meeting, the minutes shall be the official record of the action of the Council.

The secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Council, and shall read to the Council all communications addressed to the Council, at the next meeting following their reception.

The secretary shall see that the members are duly informed of the date, the hour and the place of all regular and special meetings.

Preferably the secretary should be a girl.

- d. Treasurer: The treasurer shall be a member of either grade. He (or she) shall meet the character and scholarship qualifications of the president and vice-president and perform the duties of the president in the absence of the three other officers. The treasurer shall keep a record of all financial matters concerning the Council, and shall perform the usual functions of a treasurer. The treasurer's accounts shall be audited at the end of the scholastic year by the principal or by a teacher designated by the principal.

ARTICLE IV.

Meetings of the Council

- Section 1. The Council shall meet the first time each semester at the call of the president. Thereafter, regular meetings shall be held at the time and in the place designated by the Council in the by-laws.
- Section 2. Special meetings of the Council may be called by either the president or the principal.
- Section 3. A quorum shall consist of three-fourths of the members.
- Section 4. The meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE V.

Amendments

- Section 1. Amendments to this Constitution shall be submitted to the student body on a three-fourths vote of the total membership of the Council.

- a. Amendments proposed to the Council by a member shall not be voted on not sooner than the following regular meeting of the Council.

Section 2. Amendments shall be voted on not sooner than one school month after acceptance by the Council.

Section 3. Amendments shall be in force when ratified by a three-fourths vote of the student body.

Section 4. Amendments shall be voted on by written secret ballot.

ARTICLE VI.

Schedule

Section 1. All members chosen to the Council at the final election of the school year 1947-48, shall serve for the remainder of the school year.

Section 2. Election shall be held as soon as possible after the ratification of this Constitution.

ARTICLE VII.

Ratification

Section 1. This Constitution shall be established when ratified by a three-fourths vote of the student body.

RULES OF PROCEDURE

A. Order of business

1. Roll Call
2. Reading of Minutes
3. Committee Reports
4. Communications
5. Unfinished Business
6. New Business

7. Appointment of Committees
8. Reading of the Minutes of Present Meeting
9. Adjournment

B. Meetings

1. All meetings shall follow strict parliamentary procedure.
2. Persons other than members of the Council may be present and shall be given permission to speak at any meeting on a subject of interest to them and the Council.

C. Voting

1. Generally, voting shall be by a show of hands.
2. At the request of two members, a roll-call vote shall be taken and recorded in the minutes.

D. Committees

1. All committees shall be composed of members of the Council.
2. All committee reports must be written out and signed by the members of the committee agreeing to it.

E. Minutes

1. Minutes must be written up by the secretary immediately and submitted to the office for dittoing.
2. Copies of the minutes shall be given to each home-room representative, the sponsor, and the principal.
3. Home-room representatives are to report all Council action to their home-rooms.

